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THE SON OF MAN

STUDIES IN THE GOSPEL OF MARK

BY

ANDREW C. ZENOS, D.D., LL.D.

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1914

TO

THE MEMORY OF

RUTH ELSIE AND WALTER ANDREW

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But Thee, but Thee, O Sovereign, Seer of Time,
But Thee, O Poet's Poet, Wisdom's Tongue,
But Thee, O man's best Man, O love's best Love,
O perfect life in perfect labor writ,
O all men's Comrade, Servant, King, or Priest,—
What *if* or *yet*, what mote, what flaw, what lapse,
What least defect or shadow of defect,
What rumor tattled by an enemy,
Of inference loose, what lack of grace
Even in torture's grasp, or sleep's, or death's,—
Oh, what amiss may I forgive in Thee,
Jesus, good Paragon, thou Crystal Christ?

SIDNEY LANIER.

I

THE SON OF MAN FORESHADOWED

I

THE SON OF MAN FORE-SHADOWED

MARK xiv. 21 ; DAN. vii. 13 (JOHN iii. 13, xii. 34 ; MATT. xxvi. 24 ; LUKE xviii. 31, xxii. 22).

SOME phrases, like living beings, have interesting histories. They are born, they develop to fullness and power, they serve high ends, and perhaps pass away. The title Son of Man, which Jesus used to designate Himself, is one of these. It was not invented by Him. Yet He used it constantly as if something in its make up or history had made Him fond of it. He identified Himself with it, and it with Himself in a way which has suggested to some the notion that He used it simply as a substitute for the pronoun I. This is certainly not the case. And yet the way in which He separated it from all other

uses and made it the vehicle of His own thought is more than interesting — it is significant.

Quite as significant is the strangeness of the phrase to other New Testament writers, and even to the immediate disciples of Jesus. If it is not true that they never used it, it is true that they used it because they could not avoid it—not because they found it ready to hand to do service as a vehicle of their thought. Outside of the circle of His followers it is still less familiar. It perplexes the multitude. In attempting to familiarise them with its purport, in solving the perplexity of the multitude as to its meaning, His first care was to impress it on them that though the source of His power was divine, its nature and exercise were to be in the highest sense human—*humane*, it would be better to say, were it not that even that beautiful word is scarcely full enough of the meaning infused into humanity by Jesus. It suggests—

The Son of Man Foreshadowed

1. Humanity in Contrast with Brutality.

Humanity is distinguished from brutality by intelligence, compassion, and aspiration. Intelligence changes the stubborn ignorance of the brute to courage. Compassion utilises power in the service of love. Aspiration links all resources with the highest ends.

"Who is this Son of Man?" The question was asked by those who should have known the answer. They did not, because they had allowed themselves to be led by their thoughts of who the Messiah ought to be. How often we allow our prejudgments to shut our eyes to the very plain things that enter into our lives. The figure of the Son of Man stood very clearly on the pages of Daniel.

It is true, before the days of Daniel to speak of a "son of man" was to indicate human frailty and liability to failure. It had been said, "God is not man that he should lie, neither the son of man that he should

repent" (Num. xxiii. 19); and when Ezekiel was addressed as "Son of man," it was in order that he might be made conscious of his dependence on divine help and grace for his work. But human weakness receded into the background and dignity and value into the foreground, as the Psalmist took up the phrase, and after placing before his eye the humble and meaningless side of human nature, he set over against it the great and noble as an endowment from on high. "What is man that thou art mindful of him, and the son of man that thou visitest him?" Yes, "Thou hast made him but lower than God, and crownedst him with glory and honour. Thou makest him to have dominion over the works of thy hands; thou hast put all things under his feet." Man was to be looked at not merely against the background of God's infinite greatness and holiness, but also against that of the lower creation. If, as placed in the foreground of the picture in which God is the background, man appears puny and feeble and unworthy, placed on the canvas with the inanimate and

brute world behind him he looms large, he is seen to possess excellences and merits that make him unique and supreme.

The occasion which furnished the revelation of this view of man was the struggle of the Jewish nation with the great forces of the Gentile world during the Exile and after. The Jews never aspired to rule more than their own well-defined corner of the world. But they came in touch with the races successively dominant to the east of them in the valleys of the Euphrates and Tigris, and they were enabled to realise that the lust for world dominion could take the central place among the motives of national life. Assyria, Babylonia, Persia, and Macedonia had actually come near reaching this goal. But each of them, as it successively climbed up to the place of power, had undergone a process of moral decline. The last of these world-powers had shown a special tendency toward inward disintegration. It was felt that the end was near, and with it the whole series of non-moral, and hence sub-human, powers must pass away. To the Jewish mind, with

its firm grasp on the truth that the heart and essence of the universe is the righteous will of a personal God, the breaking up of the purely natural era of brute force must necessarily bring into view the moral order. And this order was not a new creation, but the real and inner life of the universe. It was not to be brought into existence, only revealed as already maturing within the decrepit and decadent succession of world-powers. But when revealed, this inner and divine principle would manifest itself as in utter contradiction and contrast to all its predecessors. Since brute force had been their characteristic, human intelligence and humane feeling would be its characteristic. It would command indeed, and in this respect it might be arrayed with them as another, and the last in the succession of powers—but the note and the distinctive sign of its dominion would be humanness just where those that had preceded had shown brutality.

Was it not to express the will and the nature of God? But if man is made in

the image of God, the rule of God on earth must be godlike, that is to say, human. It is this that the apocalyptist-prophet was endeavouring to put before his sorely persecuted and oppressed fellow-believers. The dominion of the brute force was destined to pass away, and its place on the throne was to be occupied by a figure the very opposite of brutal—that of the Son of Man. Nay, the real throne was already occupied by this Figure. While the world was witnessing the rule of an outward and visible monarch on a throne of earthly splendour, the heavenly throne was neither vacant nor filled by a potentate of brutal nature. The Ancient of Days had as an assessor the Son of Man.

Thus, the Son of Man was at the same time a future and a present power to be reckoned with. While the genius of Hebrew prophecy seized upon the future of this figure and evolved the idea of the Messiah, the essence of the thought shows a deeper and more abiding importance in the present significance of it.

The Son of Man "which is in heaven"

and a present Sovereign, has ever been also a future ruler. To-day He is sovereign in a fuller sense, because He once manifested Himself upon earth. From the right hand of the Ancient of Days He came to take "dominion and glory and a kingdom, that all the people and nations and languages should serve him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom shall not be destroyed." And His reign, as in the ancient vision, is still the reign of the human as contrasted with the brutal in the world. The question whether in the vision of Daniel the Son of Man is an individual king or a racial kingdom is of secondary importance. The essential idea in it is that the reign of sheer force is to be supplanted by the predominance of intelligence and goodwill.

But the world has not altogether discarded sheer force. The brutal principle still struggles for ascendancy. The lust for conquest, greed for territory, the subjugation of weaker peoples by stronger, the

cruel exactions of the hard earnings of the subject race by some autocratic monarch—all these, in spite of change of method, still continue. But they continue no longer unchallenged, no longer recognised as the normal and ideal for all mankind. Side by side with them has arisen the kingdom of the Son of Man,—the reign of the Humane One,—who desires and aims that all shall have equity and justice dealt out to them. The old régime of force is still carrying on its administration. But beside it there stands the new one. There are two ideals challenging comparison. "Look on this picture, and on this." And the Son of Man is content to let the case rest upon this appeal. The more earnestly and persistently the contrast is insisted on, the more rapidly international and social brutality will be rebuked, shamed, and forced to hide its ugliness; and the more hopefully we may look to the disappearance of brutality and the triumph of humanity.

Perhaps no single character in modern history more signally typifies the dominance

of force which, according to the vision of Daniel, the Son of Man was to supersede, than Napoleon the Great. He bled half Europe white with slaughter; he deserted his early principles for a crown; he broke every pledge; he ruined the land that had trusted and exalted him, but he was the most forceful individual who walked on the earth in his own day, or for that matter in any day; and mankind had not quite outgrown its worship of force while he lived, nor has it as yet. He murdered prominent men in cold blood, but he led armies across continents and over mountains. He overthrew the First Republic, but he made kings dance to his piping. He ploughed Europe with the iron plough of his ambition, and a hundred years have not levelled the furrows. Yet he himself on his death-bed confessed Jesus Christ mightier than himself. The Son of Man had, according to his confession, established a more lasting kingdom.

But brutality as a ruling principle does not necessarily work through the forms of empire or monarchy. Overcome and

expelled as the rule of kings and potentates, it re-enters through social injustice and industrial inequality. The spirit of greed, the demon of selfishness, seizes upon the new conditions and leads men to the same pitilessness, the same cruelty (only exercised in subtler and more indirect forms), as those shown by the Assyrian and Babylonian monarchs. What matters it that the crushing, mangling,dehumanising work is done by social and industrial machinery instead of by armed hosts and uniformed officials? Nevertheless, this order too must pass away and give place to the just and humane reign of the Son of Man.

2. Humanity as Saving and Divine.

The Son of Man who is in heaven was to be the means of salvation to the whole creation. The figure in the cloud seen by Daniel was to rescue not Israel only, but the whole world from the dominion of the brute. In the very act of establishing His own kingdom as extensive and world-wide as the kingdom He was to displace and

supplant, He would bring His wholesome and beneficent rule over all mankind. It is at this point that Jesus affiliates Himself with the foreshadowed Son of Man. "And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up: that whosoever believeth may in him have eternal life."

And this is the prerogative of humanity as distinguished from brutality in all ages, that it rescues that which has value from waste and destruction, and gives it its birthright in the fair creation of God. It is only as humanity has asserted itself in the world that forces running wild in nature have been tamed and harnessed and compelled to do useful, edifying work. It is only as man has taken the reins of control over them that winds and waves, light and heat, magnetism and electricity have been glorified by being placed in subjection to higher and more abundant life and health-giving services. Left to themselves, storms and tides wear and tear and pull down. Captured and put to service by man, they

are transformed into means of building up and furthering onward the ends of life.

No doubt there still remains much brutality in the great and terrible elemental forces of nature. Flood and earthquake still break up and carry away the creations of reason and love. Icebergs and hidden shoals, fever and pestilence, still in many and unforeseen ways work havoc and ruin, lamentation and distress; but man is from generation to generation getting the upper hand in this terrific conflict. Nature, "red in tooth and claw," is being taught to respect and, though unconsciously, to do the works of righteousness and goodwill.

The work of the Saviour of mankind is but the highest manifestation of this universal law. It is the man in Jesus Christ that saves His brethren from the ravages of the brute force of sin. The ancient theologians understood this principle very well when they declined to accept or sanction any doctrine of the person of Christ which assumed that the Saviour was not possessed of a complete humanity. The faith of Christians would

never consent to a Christ with a mere phantom physical nature or a mutilated psychological constitution; it would have none of a humanity from which the full power of manhood was strained out. It was as man that the Saviour must save. It was the "Son of Man" alone who could "seek and save that which was lost."

The hope of the seer, and with it the hope of all the ages, would be a vain one indeed if the Son of Man in whom they trusted were nothing more than human, if His humanity sprang from the earth and were burdened by the earthly heritage of infirmity and failure. This it is not. He is the Son of Man "which is in heaven." In the vision He stands beside the Ancient of Days. If there is anything wholesome in man's nature, it is because he has been patterned after a divine ideal. If he was given "dominion over" the brute creation, if he was declared "better than the fowls," if it was said of him, "how much is a man better than a sheep," it is because there is that in him which links him with God Himself.

The Son of Man Foreshadowed

He who is the Son of Man is also the Son of God. It is no mere accident that these two titles have become fixed on the same person. He is the Son of Man because he is the Son of God. Theology has worked at the problem of the person of Christ for nineteen centuries, but it has scarcely advanced beyond the fundamental facts of the earliest Christian experience which kindles at the touch of the Spirit of God, enabling devout souls to recognise in Jesus the perfect man and the perfect God. He is perfect man because He is the perfect image of a certain nature and aspect of God.

The heart of the message of Christianity is that God and man are somehow kin. It was possible for God to become man, because in man there was that which could be affiliated and linked with God, and in God there was that which could adapt itself to man and live in association with man. God did become man in the Son of Man, because there was in His heart the yearning for the responsive love of the creature He had made in His own image, His child.

The painter creates his masterpiece, and every lover of beauty is caught by its charm and won by its grace to higher purposes and pure motives; the musician pours his soul into his composition, and those who drink in its soothing or inspiring strains go into the world to achieve or endure what would have been impossible before. It is not because the painting consisted of colours and canvas of a certain kind, or the music of a given number of vibrations in the air, but because the spirit of the artist imparted itself through the materials to spirits needing help. Thus the Son of Man saves because his humanity is the humanity of God.

Nietzsche looked for the solution of the problem of human life in the coming of a being of transcendent power, the Superman; but if Power be force only, the world has known enough of its dominion, and it has known it to its grief and disappointment. The rise of a superman of mere Power would be a reversion to brutality. The hope of the world must be fixed in something better, the reign of love, which is the reign of the Son of Man.

II

THE SON OF MAN IN A SINFUL WORLD

II

THE SON OF MAN IN A SINFUL WORLD

MARK ii. 10, 11 (MATT. ix. 6; LUKE v. 24).

THERE is an explanation of the phrase Son of Man which makes it equivalent to mere man. In support of this explanation the appeal is made to the Aramaic, which Jesus must have used. Since in that language it was customary to call any man son of man, Jesus, it is said, used the expression in this its ordinary sense. What He attributes to the Son of Man may be said of every man as man. This explanation, however, fails to explain the very first appearance of the phrase upon the lips of Jesus, which, if we take the Gospel of Mark as a basis, occurs in connection with the healing of the paralytic. "Thy sins be forgiven thee," He

says to the sufferer, and to the mystified bystanders: "The Son of Man has power to forgive sins." What could He have meant by the assertion that "any man" had power to forgive sin, when to demonstrate His own right to do so He thought it necessary immediately afterwards to perform a miracle?

Whatever may be the usage of this phrase from the linguistic point of view, when Jesus undertook to declare the sin of the paralytic forgiven, He was doing more than any man had any authority to do as a man. The astonishment of the scribes, who regarded His words as blasphemous, was justified if Jesus claimed to be nothing more than man; and this precisely He aims to meet when He takes up the challenge and shows by a superhuman deed that He had a right to the more than human declaration He had just made. It was not necessary that He should have claimed a divine nature, but it was necessary that He should establish His right to a special authority because of a special relation to the seat of all authority. All sin is against God, and God alone, if any one, can annul the transgression

of His own law. Whoever would proclaim that God has done this in any individual instance, must have some secret or manifest connection with God, enabling him to speak for God and in the place of God.

But the controversy as to the right of Jesus to forgive sins is of intensely practical significance, in that it shows Him at the very first glance in His attitude and relation towards human sin. His first impact with human life brings it into view. How could it be otherwise? If life is pervaded by the baleful and subtle presence of sin, wherever the sinless and ideal man comes into touch with life he must see its work and effect. What did He think of it? What did He see in it?

First He recognised it as a reality; and a reality with no right to exist. The ideal man, the man as he came at the first creation from the hands of God, must in the nature of the case look upon sin as something alien to himself. He cannot close his eyes to it. In himself or in others it cannot but be contrary to the normal order of things. Sin is what ought not to be.

1. The Recognition of Sin.

No matter how eagerly then the ideal man, no matter how eagerly Jesus in the case of the paralytic, may have desired the happiness of all the sons of men, He could never have said to them: "Do not think of your sins, sin is an unreality, a figment of the diseased mind; eliminate it from your thought." "The modern man," says Sir Oliver Lodge, "does not concern himself about his sins." Of course he means that, unlike the mediæval man, the modern man does not allow himself to be morbidly weighed down by the dread of failure to work out his own salvation. The modern man knows that failure to obtain salvation is not so much the consequence of neglect of arduous duties and painful labours as the refusal to accept the free gift of God. He has learned the lesson of his Heavenly Father's abundant grace. He does not worry himself about his sins, because he has been assured that they need not stand between him and his Maker. Nevertheless, in the sense in which the say-

ing of Sir Oliver has been frequently misunderstood, it does represent a thought diametrically opposed to the thought of Jesus.

Neither did Jesus detach it from the personality of the sinner. It was the sin of the sinner, *thy sin*.[1] It need not necessarily be assumed that the disease of the man was the direct result of his sin. But sin of some kind he had, and it was standing in the way of his welfare. It was some sin known to him, sin that had distressed and harassed him, sin whose presence in his life had darkened that life and cast the pale hue of sadness into its incidents.

Moreover, Jesus did not cut the relation between the man's sin and his responsibility. There is an easy way of absolving evil-doers in our days by representing them as rather the victims than offenders. The blame is laid to circumstances, to heredity, to environment, to evil companionships, to anything else but the choice of the offender himself. We are tempted to sum up our judgment in

[1] The surest fact about sin in my life is just that my sin is *my* sin" (P. Carnegie Simpson).

the compassionate expression, "Poor fellow, he couldn't help it." Not so Jesus. He fixes the responsibility on the sinner. "*Thy sin.*" Never did he extenuate the evil deed, or excuse the evil-doer. "Doth no one condemn thee?" he said to the one above all others who might have been viewed as the victim of others. "Neither do I condemn thee: go, and sin no more." She had sinned. She was responsible for her sin. She must abandon her sin. These are the fundamentals of His outlook on the matter. These are the essentials of His attitude on sin always. His impact with human life brings it into view, and He recognises it with all its ends.

Again, Jesus sees sin as working out destruction and death in the world of human life. It lies at the root of disease and suffering. Humanity instinctively joins the suffering of the world with the sin of the world. In doing so, it does, of course, allow itself to be misled into confusion of thought. It is true that sin and disease of body are inextricably associated, but it is not true that every disorder in the body is due to a special

sin of the individual who is afflicted. It is true that all illness is somehow due to the transgression of divine law; but it is not true that in getting rid of disease one always gets rid of the sin that caused it. It is not true that when the root of the disease in sin is found and plucked out, that the diseased condition is always and at once removed. The chain of results that sin has started into motion becomes somehow independent. It is easy to break the dam and start the flow of the water in a reservoir. It is easy to begin the process of ruin and devastation. And it may be easy enough to repair the breach, to stop the torrent from flowing. But it is certainly not easy to restore the crop that has been washed out by its roots, to rebuild the bridges that have been undermined and tumbled together into unshapely masses in the river-beds, to clean up the streets and replace the furniture into the houses from which it was floated out into the fields. It is a moment's work to break the physical constitution by disregarding or violating one of God's wise provisions for its

welfare and completeness. But it takes years to give back to the complicated organism its primitive ease in functioning and producing the living forces of a living, unified activity.

To eliminate sin is a divine work ; and to God all things are possible. To regain what has been lost by sin is man's part, and it may take years to cleanse the system of the brood of germs which have rushed in with the weakening of the body, to give elasticity and resiliency to the tissues that have been devitalised and stiffened, or to knit together those that have been torn and left with ragged edges, incapable of knitting themselves together.

The connections between sin and disease are not on the surface, and each of these two evils must be treated by itself. Nevertheless disease is a consequence of sin, and to see disease is to the healthy minded, ideal man, to see sin behind it.

2. The Son of Man Condemns Sin.

But Jesus, when He first touched human life, did more than recognise sin. He began

a warfare on it. He fought it. He assumed from the very first that it ought not to be, that it must be negatived and cancelled, that its power must be broken, its effects destroyed, its hold loosened, its sting removed.

He knew it would be a long and hard struggle. He knew it would cost many a pang, many a sigh; that it would require the sacrifice of self. He realised that he must go on the painful search for the lost, that he must entreat and beseech, persuade and intercede; but he knew also that in a universe created and controlled by his heavenly Father, there is no permanent place for sin. He knew that it is not the natural man, but the denatured man who is sinful. Whenever the first impulses towards a return show themselves, the victims of sin are to see the certain pledge of its extermination.

The Pharisees, accustomed to measure all things by rigid standards of holiness, wondered at His associating with sinners. They were certainly right in their efforts to keep their own lives free from contamination. They

must have seen that He no less than themselves was eager for a stainless life. But they could not imagine that, even though unsullied as yet by His touch with sinners, He could always remain so. And then, why should He care for sinners? Why work in such a hopelessly barren field? These publicans and harlots, were they not beyond the reach of all redeeming influences? Reasoning after this manner they were content to leave sin alone if it would leave them alone. Their attitude toward it amounted to a pact of armed but inactive hostility. To Jesus, hostility against sin meant an aggressive warfare at any cost to Himself. The ravages which it worked in the physical and social lives of men must serve to arouse in them some reaction against it, even though crude and low as far as its motive was concerned. They must be made to feel the need of something better than the husks on which sin was starving them. Then would Jesus seize upon this element in their lives and build it into the foundation of their salvation. "The Son of Man is come to

seek and to save that which was lost." Thus Jesus never ceased destroying "the works of Satan."

There is much to hearten the disciple of Jesus to-day in the work of saving the world. In two opposite directions sin works out apparently incurable results. On one side it generates a shell of selfishness, isolating its victim like the hard crustacean, impermeable, rough and stone-like armament. All approaches to the inner man seem impossible through this shell. This is the peculiar form in which it appears in those whom the world regards as better conditioned. The shell may not always be the same. In some instances it may be high intellectuality, in others æsthetic refinement, in others social standing due to wealth and exclusiveness. In all it is equally potent as a barrier to approach. The disciple of Jesus is likely to despair of the redemption of such.

Again in another direction sin may create an atmosphere of evil, through which the disciple of Jesus may imagine that he sees death and corruption and nothing more.

But the Son of Man knew that under the offensive aspect of the lower as well as under the forbidding cover of the higher type of sinner there was that which called for effort to save, and that in both cases effort properly put forth must find response.

Just one type of sin He found beyond reach, and that was the suicidal sin against the Holy Ghost; and that from its nature was impossible to detect. Though, therefore, the warning might be given that there is such a sin, practically it cannot be taken into account, since it gives no evidence of itself to the outside world by which it may be recognised.

3. The Conquest of Sin.

Jesus met sin and recognised it. He saw sin and declared Himself an enemy of it. He fought it because He saw in it the destroyer of God's children. But He did more than this. He conquered sin. "Thy sins are forgiven thee." The Pharisees were right. It was no light thing to utter that momentous declaration. It was easy

enough to pronounce the words; but to give effect to them, to show that the facts justified them, that the person to whom they were addressed was indeed and in truth cleansed of his guilt and freed from the power of sin, that was a different matter. It was no empty formula, no magic incantation, no *hocus pocus* that the sinful man needed. This paralytic, it is likely, had had enough of magic and empty formulæ in the vain effort to regain his wholeness. What he needed was an assurance backed by reality, and Jesus could give that to him.

Jesus could give him the assurance of sin forgiven because He knew God's nature and will, and He was Himself convinced of His own infallible knowledge of an unchallengeable right to declare the will of God. But even more than this, Jesus was aware that His own greatest achievement would be through His life and death to make away with sin as a barrier between God and man. It was later that He said of His own mission, "The Son of Man came to give his life a ransom for many"; and it was later that

He declared in the institution which was to perpetuate His memory that His "blood," (His life) was being poured for "the remission of sins"; but at no time in His experience could He have failed to realise that His chief work was the conquest of sin.

When men face sin in the world a serious problem is raised. What does its presence mean? Is it a reality? Is it a permanent and inalienable factor of human life? Is it an easy foe to overcome? Must each man grapple with his enemy in his own unaided strength? Questions that will not down, questions that demand and must be answered. Does Jesus give us any help in meeting and answering them?

He assures us that sin ought not to be; that man cannot rid himself of it in his own strength; that he need not fight it alone; that the Son of Man is present with him in his struggles, not to make it unnecessary for him to fight, but to guide the warfare and take upon Himself the larger part of the pain of the struggle, and that in the end victory is assured.

III

THE SON OF MAN AND HUMAN INSTITUTIONS

III

THE SON OF MAN AND HUMAN INSTITUTIONS

Mark ii. 27, 28 (Matt. xii. 8; Luke vi. 5).

Much may be learned from the way in which Jesus met criticism of His teaching and objections to His conduct. In controversy as such He took no special interest. Neither did He care to merely defend Himself or His views as a matter of vindication. His sole object in taking notice of opposition was to impress more deeply the lesson that had been but superficially learned, to clear and disentangle issues whose complexity had given occasion to cavil, and to secure a wider acceptance of eternal truths.

To this end He adapted His method to the nature of the problem discussed. He had no hard and fast logical ways of dealing. If

the issue involved was minor, He reasoned along conventional lines and upon conventional grounds. He used arguments designed to persuade the minds of His opponents. He took up as it were their own weapons and used them. He appealed to the words of the Old Testament and to logical consistency ; He used the *argumentum ad hominem*, the dilemma, the *reductio ad absurdum* ; in such cases it was not necessary so much to insist on the inherent and eternal validity of what He was standing for, as to change the attitude and method of approach of His opponents to the problems of life.

If, however, the question raised affected some vital point, Jesus did not resort to reasoning ; argument in such cases ceased to be means of bringing truth into view, and might even very easily obscure it by attracting attention to itself. Since the eternal rock foundations must be reached, and since they must be found only by the divinely given powers of each man, the all-important point was to lead to these primal

elements of thoughts and give each one the opportunity to recognise them.

The controversies regarding the Sabbath were of this latter kind. The point at issue involved the whole system of external arrangements by which religion among his fellow countrymen had been promoted and expressed for generations and ages past,—all the institutions of Judaism, as they were from another point of view typified in the rite of circumcision. Jesus' treatment of the Sabbath was therefore representative of His attitude towards all institutions and covered their function in human life, His relation to them and their relation to human freedom.

1. Institutions and their Function.

Institutions vindicate their right to be when they minister to and promote human welfare. This is just as true of the Sabbath as of any other institution. Whether discovered by accident, or developed as a result of long experience, it was surely not a purely human invention. It is not necessary to

interpret literally, and in their most superficial sense the words of the establishment of the Sabbath in the Old Testament in order to believe in its divine origin and binding force. Its beneficent operation through human history abundantly evidences this.

"The Sabbath was made for man." This is so obvious a proposition that one wonders why it should have been necessary for such a teacher as Jesus to give utterance to it. Yet it is not difficult upon a moment's reflection to see that the Sabbath was not being used for the benefit of man. In order to be a means towards advancing the higher life through it, it must be understood and observed in harmony with its purpose and nature. But as interpreted and applied by the men of Jesus' time it had failed in this. Instead of refreshing and restoring the souls of men, it had been turned into a means of wearying and distressing them. And when the soul is wearied and annoyed, even the secondary blessing of bodily invigoration suffers a check, and fails of its full effect.

One of the first experiences recorded of

the patriots in the Maccabean uprising was that in their zeal to conform to the Law, so violently attacked by their oppressors, they observed the Sabbath with absolute and unbending rigidity. They would not even fight their enemies on that day. They consented to be slaughtered without defence rather than break the Fourth Commandment. On discovering this, their Syrian opponents timed their attacks so as to bring them on the Sabbath day. Thus the Law came to be a hindrance rather than a means towards the preservation and promotion of life and welfare. Whereupon, with characteristic sanity and common sense, the early Maccabean leaders relaxed the Law sufficiently to permit them to defend themselves. But the spirit of literalism developed so early continued and even grew through the generations intervening to the days of Jesus. It is from this blind observance of prescriptions without regard to their object and purpose that Jesus recalled His generation through His attitude towards the Sabbath.

If institutions are normally mere means

towards ends, then the moment the ends fail to be attained by them they become useless. There are some things in nature which, being means towards ends, are always and everywhere effective, hence imperishable and unalterable. Their connection as means towards the ends attained by them is vital. Language is a means of intercommunication of thought, and always will be. Cultivation of the soil is a means towards larger fertility, and it is impossible to conceive of its being dispensed with. Social amenities are necessary in order to co-operation and advancement. But even in these, though the instrumentality is necessary, the special form of it may vary. Vehicles are needed for transportation ; but their exact forms may change and the power that drives them may be superseded by better. This, according to Jesus, is exactly the case with all institutions. The Sabbath is a necessary means for the promotion of human life towards its ideal, but it is not the same form and kind of Sabbath that brings about the same degree of spiritual and moral uplift always and under all circumstances.

It may, indeed, occur that apparently contrary paths may lead to the same goal. If the Sabbath was designed to develop manhood in its entirety, then in certain circumstances the only way to observe it would be to give the whole man, body, soul, and spirit, as nearly as possible to absolute quiet. For it is only with this complete relaxation of attention and energy, this perfect abandonment of the whole being to the processes of unconscious physical life, that manhood will regain its elasticity and power of resistance.

But manifestly this is not a typical, or frequently recurring, situation. Men are not often so completely exhausted that the lapse to absolute inactivity is the best form of rest. In the vast majority of cases perfect rest is best secured by a change of employment. If the Sabbath is to advance manhood to a stage further in its growth, it must in such cases include acts of worship, meditation and prayer, as well as abstinence from the usual thoughts and actions of daily life.

But even this may not be the best means of securing the end for which the Sabbath

was instituted. "Works of necessity and of mercy" have been usually construed as exceptions to the Sabbath law of rest. But there is a point of view from which they appear not exceptions at all, but instances of perfect obedience to it. They are not merely permitted by the Law, but required in its very operation. The man who went to the rescue of a beast fallen into a pit on the Sabbath day was not doing so with compunction, as if he must resort to this act as a last step in a desperate situation; he was not making a choice between the law of the Sabbath and the law of life. He was rather obeying the spirit of the law, which required of him to build himself up morally and spiritually. In the act of kindness, the deed of mercy to man or beast, he who remembered the Sabbath law was to see a means of bringing into exercise, and thus of strengthening, the finer spiritual impulses, the godlike intuitions of his nature.

Thus it may come to pass that the same end may be attained by exactly opposite, and apparently contradictory, means. In the one

case the inner man may be built up by conscientious abstinence from all active forthputting of energy, even of the subtlest spiritual kind; in the other case it may be uplifting and ennobling to engage in the hardest, most menial, muscular, sweat-producing work. The result in both cases will be the self-realisation and spiritual growth of the man. And again in both cases this will take place because of obedience to the same law. "The Sabbath was made for man."

2. The Authority of Institutions.

When Jesus said, "The Son of Man is the Lord of the Sabbath," it would be easy to interpret the phrase as though He presumed to make exceptions to the Sabbath law on His own personal responsibility, either privately or officially exercised. What it means, however, is that the needs of humanity determine the establishment, the modification, or the abolition of institutions. What a splendid illustration He furnishes of this in the new sacraments which He substituted for

those of the Old Testament. The needs of such an age and of such a race as those of the Old Testament were best served through the Levitical institutions and the rite of circumcision. But, when a new type of life was to be inaugurated, designed to extend to the whole human race, scattered over all the earth, living under all kinds of climatic conditions, through centuries and millenniums to come, it was needful that its sacramental symbolism should be limited to simpler and more universally adaptable forms.

The Sabbath and all other institutions owe their power to compel to the authority of the Son of Man. It is because humanity in its entirety agrees, and thus decrees, that it shall use an institution for its own advancement that the institution secures its hold on men's minds and hearts and becomes a power to reckon with.

The force of this principle is not limited to the religious sphere. Such a great and complex institution as modern jurisprudence is clearly under its sway. The Son of Man is the Lord of the Civil and of all Law. It

is because humanity has needed prescriptions to move it towards the exercise of rights and prerogatives, and safeguards to restrain it from the abuse of that exercise, that there has emerged a vast and complex system of precedents and regulations, of statutes and prohibitions, recognized as of real authority by the private citizen.

Look at a more specific instance, that of trial by jury. The beneficent intention of this institution and in general its successful operation in civilised society can scarcely be called into question. But how did trial by jury acquire its hold and place in modern social organisations? By proving itself to be a satisfactory means of avoiding injustice, eliminating prejudice and putting passion into the background. Its authority is the authority of the Son of Man; and so long as it harmonises with the will of the Son of Man it is above challenge.

Yea, as long as institutions express and execute the authority which has created them, they gain in strength. They become the centres around which associations gather

and cluster; and with these associations, institutions come to win more and more respect and recognition. Their power to accomplish the good for which they have been set up is enhanced and multiplied. And the authority upon which they first secured their acceptance is more clearly perceived and more effectively exercised.

But a time is apt to come in the life of institutions when they stand no longer for the good desired through them, but for some inscrutable good within themselves. The overgrowth of their own branches and foliage, as it were, conceals their connection with the root and life from which they sprang. Like parasitic vegetation, they sap the life of the stock on which they had fastened. They threaten to, and sometimes actually do, dominate the very thing which they were designed to serve. The authority on which they were based, which, indeed, made them possible, is superseded by a fictitious authority of their own. The Sabbath tends to become the lord of the Son of Man, instead of recognising the Son

of Man as its own Lord. When this point is reached the time has clearly arrived for a protest and a revolution in the name of the Son of Man.

What has been said is in general true of all institutions; but it is more especially true of those practices and forms which are associated with the worship of God. Worship is good in any form and obligatory in some form; but when it becomes fixed and rigid, and when traditional pressure gives it a standing apart from the obligation carried by its intrinsic value as a means to an end, the time has come either to end it or to mend it.

3. Institutions and Human Freedom.

When Jesus said, "The Son of Man is Lord of the Sabbath," He did not mean that man as man, or any man, had a right to abrogate or change the law of periodic rest. None but He who instituted the law had a right to do that. But He did mean that when a man learns how to realise the true value of life, and of the things which

minister to its abundance, he will neither overestimate the external and prescriptive features of the institution, nor minimise its inner power and usefulness. He will use the Sabbath as a master uses a servant, commanding him to do his bidding. He will no more allow the Sabbath law to work him injury in body, soul, or spirit than a master permits his employees to wantonly damage his property or harm his person.

In the end, therefore, Jesus places the Sabbath law, and by implication all other institutions, under the free interpretative power of those for whose benefit they have been erected, provided that such have attained the high point of vantage upon which He, the Son of Man, places them.

But, is it not putting a considerable weight of responsibility on the shoulders of individuals to ask them to interpret for themselves as to when and how they shall conform to the law? And is it not, from the point of view of the law itself, taking a considerable risk? Is the Sabbath law safe when left to every man to interpret for himself? May

it not be completely interpreted away? These questions will trouble only him who forgets that the lordship of the Sabbath is not vested in any man, but in the man who recognises the Son of Man as his Lord.

No man who so puts himself under the dominion of the Son of Man will allow himself for a moment to use the Sabbath for any other than its proper and ideal purposes. He would be denying his distinctive nature were he to act otherwise. He who for the mere sake of asserting his freedom, or serving a lower end than the ideal, would disregard the Sabbath is like a man who would reject the advantages of friendship, wealth, or happiness simply to demonstrate or promote his own self-sufficiency.

In the last analysis the whole problem resolves itself into one of the development of the highest ideals. Men aim to produce and maintain human welfare through legislative enactments. When these prove insufficient they endeavour to amend and fortify them by other enactments more minute and comprehensive, until in the end life is

enslaved, "cribbed, cabined, and confined" within a network of rigid prescriptions. When the Son of Man would add abundance to life, he begins by implanting his own image and spirit in men. Then he leaves them to use the external expressions and meanings that have proved most helpful with the freedom that those who have his image and spirit within them ought to have. "Against such there is no law."

IV

THE SON OF MAN: REDEMPTIVE MINISTRY

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MARK x. 45 (MATT. xx. 28).

THERE is much to account for the attitude of the two disciples who sought the places of honour in the Messianic kingdom. It has ever been the practice of the conquerors and rulers of the earth to reward their faithful adherents and helpers with posts of responsibility and honour. Alexander the Great raised his devoted friends to positions of command in his army. Napoleon placed his brothers and kindred on the thrones of the kingdoms he had conquered. In ancient times especially office was viewed not so much in the light of a trust to be conscientiously administered either in the interests of the entrusting sovereign or in those of the

people over whom it carried authority, as in the light of a prize to be coveted, a reward of fidelity. If, therefore, the Messianic kingdom was to have a hierarchy of officers, those who were the nearest to the king himself might very well expect headship over others when the kingdom was established.

From this ideal to that of Jesus it was a long and difficult way that the disciples were called to travel. We wonder, first of all, that they did not at once decline to go further. We do not wonder that they found it difficult to move from their position to that of Jesus. "Ye know that the princes of the Gentiles exercise dominion over them, and they that are great exercise authority over them. But it shall not be so among you: but whosoever will be great among you, let him be your minister; and whosoever would be chief among you, shall be your servant" (Matt. xx. 25–27, A.V.). It has been, and is, a hard lesson to learn for the disciples of Jesus. All through the ages those who have sincerely wished to live close to Jesus have acted as if somehow they

thought that Jesus did not mean what He said. For have they not assumed, not only the titles "Lord" and "Master," "Doctor" and "prince," but also tried to exercise the dominion and authority carried by these names and titles? There are, indeed, times when the Master's living illustration of it looms with irresistible distinctness before the eyes of the disciples, and humiliation and heart-searchings follow; but soon again, like men who wish to keep awake but whom sleep overcomes, they lapse once more into the same jealous watchfulness of each other, anxious lest their fellow-disciples may somehow gain the upper hand.

"It shall not be so among you" (A.V.). The way in which Jesus pressed His principle upon His disciples was not by adducing arguments, but by holding His own example plainly before them. "Ye call me Teacher and Lord: and ye say well; for so I am. If I then, the Lord and the Teacher, have washed your feet; ye also ought to wash each other's feet" (John xiii. 13). If the king of the kingdom was not to lord it over the people,

certainly none of them should aim to lord it over the others. "The Son of Man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister."

1. Exaltation through Abasement.

He who would be first must become such by choosing to be last. He who would seek the position of servant would rise to greatness. Exaltation through abasement: that is the paradox of Jesus. The explanation of the paradox lies in the fact that place as such is not a proper goal of ambition according to Jesus. What His disciple should seek is not place but work. And the reward of work must needs be place. In seeking work one abases himself. In receiving the reward he is exalted.

Exaltation through abasement. Yes, but not abasement in order to exaltation. There is a way of reading the principle which nullifies its real force. When one deliberately chooses a low place with the intention of thereby securing a higher one in the end, not only does he misunderstand the meaning of the Master, but as soon as his motive betrays itself, as it is bound to do, he must

needs fail to attain the end. Moreover, service undertaken for the sake of promotion to rulership soon becomes formal and perfunctory, and degenerates, as in the case of the mediæval rite of feetwashing, into an empty caricature. No one ever commanded more instant respect for Himself than Jesus did. Yet no one laid less claim to it for its own sake than He. "He made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of man" (Phil. ii. 7, A.V.). "Though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor" (2 Cor. viii. 9, A.V.). Why? Not in order to be made richer, or to be raised to a higher height, but simply and purely in order to enrich those whom He had loved. Hence, "God hath exalted and given him a name which is above every name: that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth" (Phil. ii. 9, 10). His abasement was unreserved, and its object was the lifting up of those who were sunken into a helpless dejection.

There is a generosity that aims to get more than it gives: it is the generosity of the investor. The owner of lands grants to the community a liberal tract for the erection of a church or a school in a growing territory. Apparently he impoverishes himself in order to enrich the public. In reality he enriches himself. The value of what he has given comes back to him, perhaps manifold, in the enhancement of the value of the lands remaining in his possession. To this kind of giver one may almost hear Jesus saying, "What reward have ye? Do not even the publicans the same? What do ye more than others?" What reward does the ostensibly humble man deserve who depreciates himself in order to hear others sing his praises? What more than others does the apparently self-denying man who practises his self-renunciation for a time in order later to yield himself to a more unrestrained indulgence?

The self-abasement which leads to exaltation is a self-forgetful abasement. So long as its spell holds one he knows of nothing ulterior. How often a public man has

thrown himself into some form of service, taking a lowly place in the ranks, thoughtful of nothing but the immediate good end to be accomplished, and has found himself to his great surprise the subject of applause and appreciation. And what in all such cases is of more consequence to the faithful worker, he has also earned promotion to higher forms of service. The last are constantly being forced to the first places, and the first to the last, not by the hand of a mocking Nemesis, but in accordance with a universal law. The seed that falls into the soil from the plant seems lost, but from the point of view of the plant it is the only seed that is not lost. Self-forgetful effort in behalf of others always brings forth fruit in perpetuating the good done ; and self-seeking, self-advertising activity brings its own reward, which may be, indeed, conspicuity for a season, but it is conspicuity with scorn.

2. Leadership through Service.

But exaltation and abasement alike are but means toward ends. Even self-abasement,

unreserved and self-forgetful, may not be in itself what Jesus meant to make the law of His kingdom. "The Son of Man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister." More important than exaltation through self-abasement is the lesson of leadership through service.

Among the nations the goal of ambition is that one should be offered and accept graciously the service of his inferiors. The badge of royalty is to be obeyed. "I also am a man set under authority," said the centurion with natural pride, "and I say to this one, Go, and he goeth ; and to another, Come, and he cometh" (Luke vii. 8). To have large numbers of loyal subordinates to whom one may issue orders and know that he will be implicitly respected and served, to have others work for one and to enjoy the fruits of their labours, this is what made positions of command so desirable.

There were, indeed, faint glimmerings of a different ideal of regal dignity and prerogative even in ancient times. The advisers of Rehoboam were divided into two groups.

The younger said to him, in effect, that the demands of the tribes were simply the omens of a rebellious disposition, the beginnings of anarchy, the mutterings of an impending outbreak against discipline. They must be summarily dealt with, and that with a strong hand. The only way to maintain order in such circumstances was to double the rigour of existing disciplinary measures. The older and more experienced men held up another ideal. "If thou wilt serve this people," they said, "they will obey thee." Events proved that whatever the value and wisdom of the older men may have been, that of the younger was suicidal.

Other kings in Israel, because they realised the ideal of the older advisers of Rehoboam, were more successful. They demonstrated the proposition that the perpetuity of the ruler's hold on the ruled depends on his unswerving purpose to administer the government altogether in the interests of the whole people ruled. This was what the prophets meant by righteousness as they held up the principle to the leaders of Israel. "*Ich Dien*"

should be not only the motto, but the working philosophy of the monarchy that would expect loyal subjects.

But these were only the foreshadowings, the dim anticipations of the full divine ideal of royalty. They were to become clearer when the grand figure of the Servant of Jehovah was thrown on the canvas. They were to be perfected, and perfectly revealed, in the person and mission of Jesus. In Him leadership through helpful service was shown forth in its full beauty, and the evolution of true princely character was completed. *Noblesse oblige* may now well sum up the distinctive quality of true aristocracy.

Monarchy is passing away. Democratic political institutions are prevailing all over the globe. But the spirit of self-promotion is not limited to monarchical forms of State organisation. The instinct for dominion over others, which is a form of the more primal instinct of self-preservation, continues to work. It is necessary to set over-against it what Drummond has taught us to call the "struggle for the other." Men under

democratic forms of government and under social conditions which exclude aristocratic distinctions cling to the desire to be served. They have not ceased aiming to raise themselves upon pedestals from whence they may exercise authority. They may not demand the places on the right hand and on the left hand of power as a matter of privilege because of intimacy with the absolute king; they may not ask for them on the ground of inherited rights; they may only plead the possession of hard won wealth, or of influence secured through years of work; but whether on the ground of wealth or achievement of any kind, the moment any one sets forth a claim to be ministered unto, he is placing himself in a different class from the Son of Man.

"Ye know not what ye ask," may be said to him as it was to the sons of Zebedee. "Are ye able to drink the cup that I shall drink of, and to be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with?" How eagerly these young men accepted the challenge! A young prince ambitious to enjoy the glamour and glory of the throne says, "I am able,"

to do the work of the king. But he soon discovers that the cup which accompanies the throne has for dregs, anxieties and fears, apprehensions of revolution, terrors of the assassin's dagger, or the anarchist's bomb, forebodings of humiliation and distress for the loved ones. These are not necessarily limited to the lot of the weak and unworthy ruler; they may be inevitable as ingredients of royalty under all conditions; but how different their aspect to the monarch who aims at royalty for the honour and the power it brings, from what it is to the one who takes royalty as a God-given trust and task to be performed in the spirit of loving ministry to his people. To the one they are the unexpected, mysterious and undeserved misfortunes that fickle Fortune has placed in his lot; to the other they are the cross which all faithful ministry must vicariously carry. Herod died haunted by fears and exhausted by diseases, not knowing why his lot should have been beset by so many and so sore trials. William of Orange died by the hand of the assassin, realising that he

had done the will of God, and full of peace because his efforts had resulted in measurably advancing the interests of his beloved people.

Again, the man who is emulating the place of leadership in the modern church or society —who is seeking to become pope, cardinal, bishop, president, overseer, moderator, answers the question, "Are ye able?" with a half thought out, "I am able"; and he discovers, alas! too late, that the coveted prize had attached to it a cup full of bitter dregs. There was the criticism of his brethren, the jealousy of his rivals, the misunderstanding of his motives and aims, the defection of his associates and helpers, the challenging of his wisdom, the thousand other petty trials and annoyances. How will he take these? What will they mean to him? When the cry is raised that his leadership is resulting in the muddling of affairs, that he has bungled and missed the course, that he is driving the ship to its ruin upon the rocks, what will he think of it? Will he say, It is a blind and cruel fate that has thrown him into the hands of merciless adversaries, or will he look only

to Him that judgeth aright for His judgment, and to the advancement of the cause committed to his hands as his joy? It will depend on whether he was led to the place of leadership without seeking it for himself, and accepted it as an opportunity for helpful service; or sought the position for the honour, the power, and the emoluments it would bring him.

To put the question from a slightly different point of view, Would the leader accept the sleepless nights, the carking cares, the broken health, the unkindness of critics, and the apparent waste of time and labour, if he knew these were necessary in the performance of the task? It depends on whether he views the task as a means of being ministered unto or of ministering.

3. Redemption through Suffering.

The test, then, of the service which leads to leadership is not its pure disinterestedness, but its absorbing and intense interest in the welfare of one's human brethren. And as the supreme region where welfare may be

wrought out is the spiritual, and the supreme need in the spiritual sphere is the blotting out of sin, it was meet that the supreme instance of service should issue in redemption through suffering. He "came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and *give his life a ransom for many*." But though redemption through suffering is peculiarly the characteristic of the work of the Son of Man, in a secondary and subordinate way it may be held as the goal of all service.

The world has in these latter days developed a broad idea of service. All kinds of good work are included under the enticing name. It is service to give of one's substance for the relief of suffering. We call it service to educate the mind of the ignorant and put them in a position where they can help themselves. We call it service to labour for the righting of wrongs and injustices caused by an abnormal industrial development, or incident to a too rapid growth in the scientific control of the resources of the earth. We call it service to live in a social settlement in the midst of the slums with the design of

merely showing those who have no opportunity of learning otherwise how a pure, clean, and noble life may be lived. This is all very good. It is quite possible, however, that some one or all of these forms of service may be looked at as in itself and for its sake the ultimate goal and aim of effort: and when this is done merely ameliorative effort usurps the place of redemptive service.

The Son of Man entered upon a manifold ministry. He healed the sick, he cheered the discouraged, he comforted the sorrowing, he raised the downfallen, he taught the ignorant; and all ministries along these lines in His name must undoubtedly be reckoned as affiliated with His work, as having the sanction of His example and the promise of His approval. Nevertheless it must never be forgotten that the primary object of Jesus in ministering was the salvation of souls from the thraldom of sin. "The Son of Man came to seek and to save that which was lost." Had the ills of humanity been merely those of ignorance or poverty, of bodily weakness or inadequate

legislation, the Son of Man might have left the natural provisions of the universe to work out the problem of the elimination of these evils as they have had a tendency to do in all ages. But the truth is that behind and beneath all these subordinate evils there is one common root and principle of life: and that, experience has demonstrated no processes of evolution have a tendency to eliminate, and no growth of civilisation has a tendency to diminish. It was this that was causing the "loss" of men and women; and therefore it was this that the Son of Man was concerned to attack, and from the power of this it was His purpose and endeavour to rescue the children of God.

The Pharisees of old called it "*Yetser-ha-ra'*" (the principle of evil), theologians have named it "Original Sin" and "Total Depravity." And these terms have in the course of their use acquired connotations of an objectionable character. We may easily dispense with their use since Jesus Himself did not resort to them to express His meaning. But there can be no question

whatever that the thing they aim to express is a fact of experience and an assumption of Jesus in His whole attitude and teaching. Redemptive ministry meant to Him giving "his life a ransom for many." And all ministry was summed up and capitalised in His suffering for the redemption of His lost sheep. Nor could redemption be accomplished except by the way of His giving His life a ransom. There are axiomatic truths in the physical sphere, as that the whole is more than any of its parts, or that two bodies cannot occupy the same space at the same time. There seems to be a necessary and even axiomatic truth in the realm of spiritual reality, less obvious, perhaps, because truth in the higher sphere is always less easy to discern, that redemption cannot be accomplished except through vicarious suffering.

Finally, such redemptive service can only be rendered by one who is himself in no need of redemption, hence for human beings by those who have been redeemed. Only as the soul has realised the double truth that

once redeemed there can be no more anxiety for its own blessedness, and that the blessing of redemption in contrast to the distress and danger of sin is of infinite value, can it with adequate and carrying motive power take up the work of ministering to others and giving its own life a ransom for many.

V

THE SON OF MAN A VICTIM

V

THE SON OF MAN A VICTIM

Mark ix. 31, x. 33, xiv. 21, 41 (Matt. xvii. 22, xxvi. 2, 24, 45; Luke ix. 44, xxii. 28; Mark viii. 31; Matt. xvii. 12; Luke ix. 22).

It was not necessary that an angel from heaven should have taught men that a Sinless man, if he should appear in an unideally conditioned world, must necessarily suffer. Plato in a very familiar passage says, "The righteous man, being thought unrighteous, will be scourged, racked, bound; will have his eyes put out; and finally, having endured all sorts of evil, will be impaled" (*Rep.* ii. 361). It was inevitable that where moral standards have been perverted, the good should be thought evil and the evil good. The good man, according to Plato, suffers not because he was known to

be good, but because he was thought to be bad. The perfect man measured by perverted standards must needs appear wicked and be awarded the judgment of the wicked.

When William Carey awoke to the real nature and genius of the gospel as a message of world-wide power and application, and proposed missionary enterprise among the heathen at the Northamptonshire Association, Mr. John Ryland vehemently called him "a most miserable enthusiast." Probably the great body of the membership of the Association concurred in this judgment. When John Wesley and George Whitefield began their fervid evangelistic work, pleading with their audiences for immediate decision for Christ, the representatives of an easy-going ecclesiasticism, moving in traditional grooves, denounced them in all manner of severe and derogatory terms. No thoughtful or observant reformer with ideals above those of his generation will expect a cordial welcome and an earnest co-operation from the corrupt age he is aiming to bring to a sense of better things. The face of a sinless

man in a sinful community is a challenge to the forces of evil which they will not be slow to take up. By His very coming into the world the Son of Man places Himself across the path of sin. Will sin fail to fight for its life? Does the wild beast at bay give up meekly to the hunter who is seeking its life? Does the stream across whose path the dam has been built fail to rise in its accumulated volume and weight in a determined struggle to sweep the barrier or overleap it in its irresistible march towards the ocean? "The Son of Man must suffer at the hands of sinful men." The sin that is in them must needs arise to sting and wound and "bruise his heel."

But the suffering of the Son of Man took certain forms, which, characteristic as they may be, are not at first sight congruous with His mission.

1. Betrayal.

First of all, He was "betrayed." It is interesting to note how much is said of the betrayal of Jesus. The expectation of it

weighed heavily upon His mind, so that He foreshadowed it to His followers. Judas, who perpetrated the act, was indelibly marked with the stamp of its dark shame. His former companions could not, after the act, think of him apart from the blot on his record, nor speak of him without adding the descriptive "which was to betray him." Even in the preliminary enumeration of the disciples his last infamous deed must be linked with his name—"Judas, who also betrayed him." When in the course of the narrative of the last days the arrest is reached, it is with special circumstantiality that the betrayal is placed before the eye of the reader. The scene in the garden, the approach of the officers with the mob armed with sticks and staves under the leadership of Judas, the sign of the kiss—all these details are given with more than ordinary care and fullness.

Why this special emphasis on the darkest hour of Jesus' life? Evidently because it had impressed all observers with the enormity of its offence. A betrayal is in the nature

of the case an especially grave wrong. It is falsehood to a trust. An enemy may oppose and fight; and he may do so in an open and honourable way. A friend must first betray before he can fight. He cannot fight honourably until he has openly ceased to be a friend. But the traitor persists in appearing a friend when at heart he has become an enemy. Betrayal can only take place under the cover of friendship; therefore its best emblem is the wolf clothed in the skin of the lamb, whose object is to devour and destroy what it appears to befriend. Its perpetrator uses the most sacred of relationships as ground of the vilest and most hateful of offences.

Shakespeare's Julius Cæsar was not surprised to see among his assassins the dark eyes of the "lean Cassius," or of the "envious Casca"; but when he perceived the genial face of his noble friend Brutus in the group, he quite gave way; "ingratitude, more strong than traitors' arms, quite vanquished him." Thus it has come to pass that Judas has borne the stigma of dishonour,

the mark of Cain, on his name and reputation through the Christian centuries.

Men will almost forgive the foul immoralities and brutal cruelties of a Herod, of a Nero, a Caligula, or an Alexander Borgia; but they will not condone the treachery of a Benedict Arnold or a Judas Iscariot. Nothing in the whole range of human passions serves as a better means of stirring indignation and calling upon itself the execration of the healthy man than the sin of treason. Therefore in literature nothing is more apt to arouse profounder hatred than this sin; and in the criminal code nothing is placed above it as a crime, and punished with a severer penalty than "high treason." In the tragedy of *Macbeth* it was not so much the heartlessness of the cold-blooded murder that pierced the conscience-stricken king and broke him down, as that the crime was committed under the cover of friendly hospitality. In an open war much severer cruelty might have been displayed; but the betrayal of the holiest of trusts, of friendship, led to the incurable, uncleansable stain. All

of great Neptune's ocean could not wash away the blot.

The Son of Man was made the victim of this the blackest form of human depravity. Is there any significance in the fact? Was it a mere accident? or was it an incident growing out of the very nature of the relation He sustained to the moral order of the universe? An incident, but inevitable in the circumstances. Its significance must be found in the uncompromising character of the conflict with sin. It was no mere superficial, formal engagement to satisfy an empty code of honour, after the manner of a modern duel. It was a deadly combat in which He grappled with the invisible powers and was assailed by them as a mortal foe. The Son of Man must, indeed, be betrayed into the hands of men. Thus only could He drain the bitterness of the cup to the uttermost.

2. Suffering.

"The Son of Man must suffer many things, and be rejected by the elders, and by the chief priests, and scribes." "The elders,"

"the chief priests," "the scribes"—these are the potent influences in social life which always tend to become more and more completely organized, and to assume greater and greater authority. "The elders," *i.e.*, those who were appointed to rule, the governing body; "the chief priests," *i.e.*, the officers of the churches, the ministers of religion, those who by reason of their ministering in the religious services had come to be regarded as the specially accredited executors of the divine will; and the "scribes," *i.e.*, the representatives of learning, the teachers of the people, the literary class, who were therefore the guardians of the intellectual interests of the people. The enumeration is exhaustive. All classes of leaders and all types of leadership in the community were concerned with the appearance of the Son of Man. For He presents Himself as the typical and comprehensive leader; and to each type as well as to each individual He has an ideal to hold up. But by each class He is rejected.

Being rejected by the leaders, He was rejected by the community. It is true that

some individuals, such as Nicodemus and Joseph of Arimathea, would not concur in His rejection; and that others went even further towards Him, and were destined in later days to be His active followers and disciples; but for the moment His rejection was complete, and it expressed the feeling and attitude of the whole community towards Him. Rightly and wrongly the leaders have borne the brunt of the responsibility of His rejection. Rightly, because it belonged to them to guide the people to the best action, and they failed to do this. Rightly, also, because no matter how impotent the leader may be at times when the tide of popular feeling has risen high and passed beyond his control, in the end he is one of the makers of the feeling: and without his active co-operation it could not have risen so high. The leader's responsibility is always greater than that of the mere unit in the crowd. But these leaders have been also in a measure wrongly held accountable for the suffering of Jesus because the people who followed were equally guilty. The ancient

prophet's "Like people like priests" was ever a true maxim. No people at any time can place the whole burden of its wrong-doing with the consequent misfortune on the shoulders of its leaders. But whether people or followers were more to blame, the rejection so far as the Son of Man was concerned was complete.

Nor was it a passive or negative one. It was no mere silent disregard, a contemptuous dismissal of His claims, a supercilious scorn that will not condescend to so unworthy an adversary. When a crisis arises it may be met as a great opportunity, a tide with which one may move and advance the world's progress; or it may be met as a call to warfare, a stream that must be stemmed and reversed; and again it may be met as a matter of no immediate concern, since the forces that are to settle the issue raised are adequately at work within the crisis itself. In the last case the statesman adopts a policy of masterly inaction. This was not the way the leaders looked upon the crisis raised by the appearance of Jesus. No policy of

silence could satisfy the conditions. They must take note of Him, they must gird themselves to the conflict with Him. He was too great to be passed by; too conspicuous to be ignored.

There is that in Jesus which commands men to some kind of attitude towards Him. The instant His true nature and claims are apprehended, it is necessary to reckon with Him. If not accepted He must be rejected. He always divides the world into opposing camps. He that is not for Him must be against Him. "He came unto his own, and his own received him not." But this was not the end. "But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become sons of God." "For judgment I am come into the world, that they which see not might see, and that they which see might be made blind." Has there ever arisen among the sons of men one who, like this Son of Man, has drawn from the lips of His brethren so much animated expression or such vehement rejection?

"He must suffer many things," not

necessarily bodily maltreatment. This was severe enough in His case. The scourgings and buffetings, the nails piercing His hands and feet, the carrying of Him bodily to and fro: these are incidents in the suffering of the Son of Man, and serious, no doubt; but more serious than these were the pangs that entered His soul, the hatred and malice, the misunderstanding and misrepresentation, the bitterness of spirit and the hopeless and cheerless ill-will that lay behind these outward acts of His persecutors.

The bodily pain inflicted on Jesus in the days of His flesh was but a circumstance, and an inevitable one, in the whole complex of outward aspects of the life of His age. Offenders must needs be dealt with in that way. The times have changed. That method of treating criminals, either alleged or real, has passed away. Men no longer scourge, buffet, or publicly crucify offenders against the law of the State or the Church. But there is reason to believe that Jesus was not much pained by these outward blows. Those that raised His body on the Cross and

otherwise treated it as that of a criminal, elicited from His lips the alleviative: "They know not what they do." But the pain of seeing men vent feelings of malice and hatred, the realisation that the good He was doing them was being misunderstood, the doubt as to the present success at least of His Messianic mission—for these things there seemed to be neither excuse nor extenuation. These pierced Him to the heart.

And has the spirit that actuated the chief priests and scribes in their treatment of Jesus passed away? Men, even the most hostile to Him and to the institutions He has created, would shrink with horror from the idea of inflicting physical pain upon such an one as He was. But do they not still pass from misunderstanding to rejection of Him? Do they not with their evil and unworthy thoughts of Him still cause Him to "suffer many things." Do they not by their contemptuous treatment "of the least" of His brethren, by their proud and censorious attitude towards His gospel of compassion, still grieve and break His

heart? The old prophet characterised the ideal sufferer as "despised and rejected of men, a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief." And the description fits, and must always fit, Jesus the sinbearer, as long as the aim of His coming into the world is hindered and counteracted by the sins of men.

3. Death.

But the valley of humiliation had a deeper level for the Son of Man to tread, even that of death. The Apostle Paul in his familiar portraiture of the ladder through which the Eternal Son reached this depth points out its various rungs. The first step in the downward course was that "he emptied himself"; the second, that He "took the form of a servant"; the third, that "he was made in the likeness of men"; the fourth, that "being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself"; and the fifth, that "he became obedient unto death," and the Apostle adds the cap to the climax as he points to the form of the death, "Yea, the death of the cross."

To submit to death is, in itself, neither misfortune nor merit. It carries neither honour nor deprivation. Death coming at the end of full and complete life may be a blessing. An eminent scientist has propounded the view that by nature man should be endowed with an "instinct for death" just as he is endowed with an instinct for life. It is his meaning that when life has run its course and its stream has spent its force, there should ensue the hunger and expectation for death just as naturally as the desire for sleep after a day of healthy toil, or the desire for food and drink after thorough depletion. The reason such an instinct does not manifest itself in human experience is that life, because of unnatural conditions, is cut off before the proper stage is normally reached for the development of the instinct. However this may be, death certainly has a place in the complete experience of a man, and it cannot in itself be regarded as a curse except in a world that has ceased to be normal.

But why should the Son of Man be *put*

to death? To die is one thing and to be put to death is quite another. Why should the ideal man be put to death? Why indeed, except that he came into a world of sin, a world in which not death as a release from earthly and purely physical conditions was the ruling principle, but one pervaded and completely controlled by sin,—a death in which sin is a controlling factor, a death in consequence of sin.

Thus the death of Jesus, like His life, is symbolised by the whole burnt-offering, a perfect, absolute, unqualified surrender of His whole self, an unreserved dedication of His personality to the work He undertook to accomplish and to the will of His Heavenly Father. "Yea, the death of the cross," exclaims the Apostle as he contemplates the self-sacrifice of the Saviour of mankind. The Son of Man must, indeed, be put to death.

VI

THE SON OF MAN TRIUMPHANT

VI

THE SON OF MAN TRIUMPHANT

Mark ix. 9, viii. 38 (Matt. xii. 40, xvii. 12, xiii. 41, xvi. 27, 28, xxvi. 64).

It appeared an incredible thing to the disciples of Jesus that He whom they believed to be the Messiah and who called Himself the Son of Man to them, should be put to death. The prediction of such an event was so startling and perplexing that the spokesman of the group must needs voice the protest of the faithful and loving followers. In this prediction what they saw of the supernatural element in their leader must have seemed to contradict itself. Trusting in the supernatural knowledge of their Master, they must believe His foreshadowing of His tragic end; but again, thinking of His supernatural power as a worker of miracles, could they believe

that it was necessary for Him to surrender Himself to His enemies?

Moreover, why should He be put to death? He was no vehement preacher of sedition. What possible ground could there be upon which just action leading to His death could be taken by the rulers? Were He, like some former claimants to the Messiahship, the organizer of an open rebellion against the powers that be, His gloomy outlook into the future might have some plausibility; but for a teacher of righteousness, for a law-abiding citizen such as He was, the only just recompense must be a supernatural, or as we nowadays call it, "apocalyptic" ratification and establishment of His Messiahship.

But if it was bold for Jesus to predict His own violent death, it was quite as bold, if not indeed much bolder, to predict His rising from the tomb. Here, too, was an outlook highly improbable in itself. The resurrection idea, though not unfamiliar to the disciples, was by them, as it was by the Pharisees, associated with the remote event of the end of the world, the great "Day of Jehovah."

For a resurrection to happen as a sporadic event to any individual was very hard indeed, if not impossible, to believe. And yet the combination of the two predictions of death and resurrection must have helped to lessen the difficulty of believing either separately. Just because He could and should rise again, the Son of Man might look upon His violent death with equanimity. In some way not to be clearly seen, His death might be the means towards the accomplishment of a higher end, if only He were to shake Himself free of the power of death in the end. And again, if Jesus was to die as the Messiah, His resurrection would at once be taken out of the class of ordinary events and placed in an entirely different category. Thus in the Son of Man apparent contradictions are always reconciled. If He exhibits weakness before the eyes of men, it is in order to show strength. If He is strong, it is that He may give up His strength in the struggle for the good of His loved ones. His defeat is His triumph.

1. The Resurrection of the Son of Man.

That the Chosen of Fortune could not remain a permanent victim of misfortune has been the widespread belief and conviction of all ages. It is, indeed, the counterpart of the prophetic "Thou wilt not suffer thy Holy One to see corruption." Unless it be regarded as a gratuitous introduction of prodigy into human thought, the resurrection of Osiris or Adonis means the confidence that what has flourished in glory is ever stronger than the powers of decay.

The Persian sages argued that it is easier to bring back into life one who has died than to create him out of nothing. For in creating, the creator must bring into being both the idea and the material of the creature, whereas in the restoring the dead to life the idea was already in existence. The pattern is at hand, and all that is needed is to give it back its power and substance. Or, to put it in another form, creation, because it must proceed without antecedents, must be harder than resurrection

with the path already marked out for it by creation. But Persian sage, Greek philosopher, and Hebrew seer alike resorted to the idea of resurrection as a protest against the idea that the noble and great among men should be in the end swallowed up in non-existence.

In all these earlier premonitions of a possible rising to life of those who had died, it is only the select that are thought of as entitled to the privilege. "Thou shalt not suffer thy beloved one to see corruption." In the case of Osiris, it was the demigod who through resurrection was deified. The hero who possessed irrepressible energy or indestructible life might aspire to victory over the powers of darkness. There was no comfort in this to the ordinary man. Hence it does not appear that belief in the resurrection of an Osiris or an Adonis had any bearing whatever on the everyday life of the devotee of the ancient cults.

Quite different is the function of the belief in the resurrection of the Christ in the New Testament. From the moment

when Jesus predicted it the event is associated with His public work as Saviour. It is not for Himself that He either dies or rises again not to display His power over the world principle, nor to illustrate a cosmic law, nor yet to prove the truth of the conviction that a noble, a pre-eminent soul might enjoy a rare privilege, but that the whole race might be made partakers of eternal life. His resurrection is not meant as the occasion of arousing sympathy for and fellowship in His joy, but to assure of an inner and vital identification of Himself with them.

Thus the whole treatment of the saving work of Jesus in the apostolic references to it co-ordinates His resurrection with His death. As He dies in order to give His life a ransom for many, so He rises in order to bring many into a new life. Paul clearly and logically establishes this connection. "He was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification" (Rom. iv. 25). But He is not alone in making the resurrection the corner-stone of salvation. "God," according to Peter, "begat us again

unto a living hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead" (1 Pet. i. 3). John has so thoroughly apprehended the significance of the resurrection of the Master that he not only gives the most extensive and detailed account of the event, but preserves the immortal and invaluable utterance: "I am the resurrection and the life" (John xi. 25).

One does not wonder that whereas the working out of the resurrection thought around the story of Osiris and around the story of Adonis once flourished in the form of a mere myth, but has now been left to the archæologist, the historian, and the lover of folklore to cherish, the resurrection fact of the Gospel, the return from the tomb of Jesus, has retained all its first vitality: yea, and that it has gained with every new interweaving of it into human experience.

2. The Victory over Death.

Thus far we have followed the thought of the resurrection of Jesus involved in His

Messiahship. "Thou wilt not suffer thy Holy One to see corruption"; not, however, for His own sake. Nothing that enters into the experience of the Messiah, the Son of Man, is for His own sake. He is not suffered to see corruption in order that His holy ones might be associated with Him in His joys and have the assurance that though the worst had happened to them they can still maintain their place and privilege as the children of God.

The Son of Man is not exempt from suffering and death in a world of sin. How then can any other man expect to be? But the Son of Man has triumphed over suffering and death; he has defied it, and it has done its worst on him; yet he has won the victory over it at its strongest. Even death lies conquered and shorn of its terrors at his feet. Therefore all the sons of men for all time may look to the final victory over suffering and death.

"Jesus rose, no longer now
Can thy terrors, death, appal me;
Jesus rose, and well I know
From the grave He will recall me."

The revolutionary significance of the resurrection of Jesus for the experience of death, though at first glance obvious enough, can be easily underestimated. The anticipation of death has a tendency to distress, depress, and even paralyse the normal movement of life. There are times and circumstances in which the expectation comes with even terrifying force. In its mildest form the emotion excited, as, for instance, in the aged who have lived the full measure of days on earth, is one of deep regret. There is a pathetic passage in one of Herbert Spencer's latest letters, in which, after attaining his eightieth birthday, he faces the prospect of speedy dissolution, and speaks of the sadness that fills his soul as he thinks that soon the world of birds and flowers, of sunshine and blue skies, of progress in knowledge and enjoyment of friendships, must close to him.

And the fuller and purer has been the stream of life, the greater the regret at its running dry. The nobler the aspirations, the more strenuous the endeavours to achieve

ideals, the greater the self-denials in the struggle for better things, the greater the waste and loss and the consequent pathos at the view of the cutting off of life even at the end of its normal length. "If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable." "If after the manner of men I have fought with beasts at Ephesus, what advantageth it me, if the dead rise not? Let us eat and drink; for to-morrow we die" (1 Cor. xv. 19, 32). Thus wrote one whose years were comparatively full; he was not a very young man; and his life had been full of good works; yet he found no perfect satisfaction in the backward look; nor will any one in a healthy frame of mind. The soul must be able to look forward in order to feel that it has had fair treatment in the struggle of life.

But the case is even more serious, more full of pathos and sadness, when, instead of coming to the end of a long and full career, man is cut off in the midst of his days. Add to this the frequent and unaccountable, either physically or morally, association of

pain and disease with the ending of life. What is more pathetic than the sight of a young person stricken with an incurable malady, desirous to live, full of hope, and even of determination, realising that hopes and prayers and efforts of will and skill must alike prove futile? How even the Christian world stands dumbfounded and staggered by the untimely taking away of some heroic young man, like Henry Martyn, David Brainerd, Ion Keith-Falconer, or William Whiting Borden, whose life promised so much for the advancement of the kingdom of God. And if the gospel were a religion of this world and for this world only, the misgivings and forebodings of Christendom in such circumstances would be justified. But the rising of the Son of Man from the dead puts an entirely different aspect both on the peaceful departure of the aged and of the strong and active man in the flower of his manhood. Death is not the conqueror, but the servant of life.

The worst that could have been done has been done, and the Son of Man remains not

only unscathed, but master over his adversary. He has the enemy at his mercy. There are conflicts which end in the annihilation of either party. They can end in no other way. The contestants are absolutely incompatible with one another. As long as they both live they must contend for the extermination of the other. Such is the conflict of Christ and sin, but not such was the conflict between Christ and death. It was rather a contest for place. Death being conquered, he becomes the obedient minister of the Lord of Life. Therefore the Church has ever sung:

"Alleluia; The strife is o'er, the battle done;
The victory of life is won;
The song of triumph has begun.

The powers of death have done their worst;
But Christ their legions hath dispersed;
Let shouts of holy joy outburst. Alleluia."

3. The Son of Man in Glory.

But rising from the dead, great and wonderful and meaningful as the fact may

be, is not all that the Son of Man has achieved. He has ascended into glory. "What is man, that thou art mindful of him? or the son of man, that thou visitest him?" sang the ancient Psalmist. And the New Testament writer, quoting the words and applying them to Jesus, adds as he explains their meaning: "But now we behold him, who has been made a little lower than the angels, even Jesus, because of the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour" (Heb. ii. 5–8). "Crowned with glory and honour" for the suffering of death! The experience of death, then, adds to the lustre of the crown which was His from the beginning. It may even be said that it was a new crown He won through death and resurrection. The Cross and the victory over death do not merely replace things in the order in which they were before sin. Redemption is no mere restitution. It involves an advance. There are diseases which, when healed, lead to purer health than that enjoyed before they came. There are misfortunes, the overcoming of

which leaves a greater blessing than could have come without them. It is well at times to preserve a structure in its primitive simplicity; but when that structure has been wrecked, to take up the ruins and make them over into a grander and more stately edifice, this is, indeed, the noble part of the true artist. It is conceivable that the almighty Creator might have prevented the entrance of sin into the world. But after sin did enter, that He should take up the ruins and reconstitute them into a better world than one that has never known sin, this is His glory. "Where sin abounded, grace did abound more exceedingly" (Rom. v. 20). The gain through redemption is greater than the loss through sin. The glory after the resurrection is more brilliant than the pleasure of a life without sacrifice and death.

We are not disturbed in this thought by the logical and purely speculative consideration, that if Christ was a divine person His glory in His pre-existence could not be increased by resurrection, as it could not have

been diminished by the humiliation of the incarnation. Since as God He did yearn for those who needed His saving ministry, and since He did "for the joy that was set before him endure the cross, despising the shame," and that "he hath sat down at the right hand of God," it must needs be that the reward adds something to His satisfaction, that "the joy that was set before him" was greater than that He was possessing before.

But what, after all, is the glory of God? What is the glory of the Son of Man? The glory of God is surely nothing else than the glow of the warmth of His love spreading and engulfing ever increasing multitudes of His children. Men glorify God not when they stand in awe of His inconceivable greatness, or obey His will out of sheer dread lest by disobeying they bring wrath and condemnation on themselves, or by chanting His praise in words and strains carrying no depth of meaning, but when they yield themselves to His love and allow Him to work His gracious will through them.

It is thus that He gets honour to Himself through them.

What then, once more, is the glory of the Son of Man? Jesus told His disciples that His meat and drink was to do the will of the Father that sent Him. The glory of the Son of Man is to induce the largest number possible of His brethren to come within the reach of the Father's love. The glory of the Son of Man is the light which issues from His countenance as He contemplates the blessedness created by His successful achievement of the work of redemption. "He shall see of the travail of his soul and shall be satisfied" (Isa. liii. 11). This must be taken as the standard and measure of the glory of the Redeemer at the right hand of God.

The tyrant may count it his glory that men fear him and obey him. The pompous potentate may deem it his glory that the dazzling splendour of his robes and the glittering crown he wears fill the poverty-stricken multitude with amazement and envy. The worldling may think it his

glory when men praise his genius and applaud his wonderful achievements, or even his goodness and kindly disposition. But the mother's glory consists in the genuine well-doing (not merely the welfare) of those whom she has nourished and cared for. "Behold my jewels," she says, in the person of the Roman matron. It was the glory of the mother of the Gracchi to have given herself for her sons and to see in them realised her best ideals for herself.

This was in a manner signified when Jesus broke forth into rejoicing as He was told of the desire of the Greeks to see Him at Jerusalem. "The hour is come that the Son of Man should be glorified" (John xii. 23, 24). These Greeks were the vanguard of a vast army, the first arrivals of an endless migration. They evoked the vision before His eyes of the world-wide movement of the Gentiles toward Him. The multitudes, invisible to others, were seen by His own keen eyes. The hour had already struck. The love of God which He had made known and available to all would be presently tasted

by the world for which He was to give His life a ransom. This was, indeed, a reward to be enjoyed and at the same time a goal to be achieved. No wonder that it filled His soul with inexpressible emotion and led Him to the sacrifice that He must make with new determination. What if that sacrifice seemed to be the effacement of Himself? "Except a grain of wheat fall into the earth and die, it abideth by itself alone; but if it die, it beareth much fruit." He was glorified in that he bore much fruit.

The resurrection of the Son of Man, His triumph over death, His reduction of the last enemy into not merely a harmless adversary, but into a willing and useful minister of good, His ascent into His glory, are not for Himself alone. They are like the wealth for which the father of the household toils and plans, to be placed at the disposal of his loved ones. He can only enjoy them in full as he shares them in full with those who belong to him, of whom he also says in his intercessory prayer, "I am glorified in them."

VII

THE SON OF MAN IN THE WORLD'S FUTURE

VII

THE SON OF MAN IN THE WORLD'S FUTURE

MARK xiii. 26, xiv. 62 (MATT. x. 23, xxv. 13, 31, xxiv. 30; LUKE ix. 26, xii. 40, xviii. 8, xxi. 27).

To the modern mind one of the most striking features of Apostolic and early Christian thought is the strength and widespread prevalence of the belief that Jesus was to make a second appearance very shortly. The man of the twentieth century is bound to ask: "How did this belief arise? and why was it so firmly and vividly held?" One answer to these questions is, that Jesus Himself predicted His early second coming. The scholarship of these latter days is largely behind this view. Grudgingly at first, and with many misgivings on the part of some, the concession has been made to exact

historical research. Jesus did cast His message concerning the coming of the Kingdom of God into a form carrying in itself the idea of His own coming again in visible splendour, and that within the lifetime of His hearers.

But behind the utterances of Jesus and conditioning them lay the Old Testament picture of the Messianic reign. Whatever else this picture might or might not mean in detail to the mind of the time of Jesus, it did convey the idea of a dispensation of ideal conditions and invaluable blessings. And, since Jesus had not fulfilled in a visible and tangible form this promise of prophecy, if He was indeed the Messiah, the only logical inference must be that He had postponed this part of the Messianic work to a later date. He must then come again to complete His work. It might thus be said the belief in the Second Coming was an inevitable corollary of the acceptance of Him as the Messiah of Prophecy.

But modes of expression used by Jesus and the Old Testament conceptions of the

Messiah are alike historical outcroppings of a more deep-rooted reality and a fundamental need in human nature which this reality meets and satisfies. The conviction that the Son of Man was to get complete control of the organisation of humanity and manifest His will in a perfect, and perfectly just, order of social life, would not have secured its hold on the minds of men, either in its Jewish or in its Christian form, were it not that the human heart at its best moments hungers just for that consummation, and that there is a real culmination for the Kingdom of God which satisfies this spiritual hunger. It is this that best explains both the words of Jesus and the enthusiastic acceptance and vigorous and joyful transmission of the truth of the Second Coming of the Master.

1. The Certainty of the Second Coming.

The assurance that the Christ would make a second entrance into the world of human affairs is interlinked with the fact of His resurrection and ascension. "He shall

come" means first of all that He is absent to the eye of the body, but real to the eye of faith ; He rules as the King of glory. The term which the early Christians used was not "second" coming, or coming of any kind, but "Presence" (*Parousia*). It was the transformation of the existence of the Master from a hidden reality to an actively felt presence that appealed to them and impressed them, the change from faith to sight, the perfecting of the experience of companionship with Him in the restoration of ideal order to the world by the inclusion in it of the physical side of His being.

The Presence of the Master is from this point of view a bringing into visibility of the invisible. It is described as a "manifestation," a "revelation," an "appearing." "When he shall appear," "If he shall appear," says John (1 John iii. 3). "When Christ, who is our life, shall be manifested," says Paul (Col. iii. 4). When Paul would impress it upon the mind of the young Timothy that his duties as a servant of the gospel are of a most important character, he

charges him by "the appearing (of the Christ)" (2 Tim. iv. 1). When he would commend to Titus a pure life as the subject of preaching, he points to "the hope and appearing of the glory of the Great God and Saviour Jesus Christ" (Tit. ii. 13). Peter likewise holds up "the revelation (A.V. "appearing") of Jesus Christ" (1 Pet. i. 2) as a ground for patient endurance of present affliction.

The assurance of the future disclosure of Him is even now a vivid reality and a guarantee of his continued interest in our present efforts and struggles. He has not gone from the world and left us with a fund of good, which henceforth we may use irresponsibly, which we may risk and possibly lose. He shall come again! Therefore all we do is of consequence to Him. Thus in all the allusions to the future Return as a "revelation," or "manifestation," there is a practical aim in view.

First of all, the hope of His coming again becomes "an anchor of the soul, both sure

and steadfast." Men dared in the Apostolic days, and have dared ever since, to stand by what they have received from Christ, because they have known that He would justify them in their trust of Him, and prove to a gainsaying world that they were not deceived, that they had not misplaced their confidence. There were hours of temptation in those early days. There have been hours of darkness and trial ever since. Nor is the time for them past. All through these the call of the Master is the same: "That which ye have, hold fast till I come" (Rev. ii. 25). Thus has this hope worked out the conservation of gain in Christian experience. In facing all enmity, all opposition and effort to despoil one of his treasure as a Christian, let this word but be spoken and the soul is filled with courage and steadfastness.

In another direction the same confidence becomes a strong motive for watchfulness. All expectation begets vigilance. The evil we expect stirs us to watch and be ready to meet and fight it. From this point of view, considering the effect of His coming on the

weak and those who might be found in default of duty, the Master compares His coming to that of a thief in the night. The emphasis is on the uncertainty as to the time. Watchfulness is a needed means to preserve from the despondency and the running low of the powers which result in letting go and giving up. "Watch, therefore, for ye know not the day nor the hour" (Mark xiii. 33).

But there is another sort of watchfulness resulting from expectation of good. "When the Son of Man cometh shall he find faith on the earth?" (Luke xviii. 8). He shall. Because there shall be many who shall be eagerly looking forward to the privilege and the blessing of fellowship with Him. Being assured that at least, so far as it concerns them, His coming is not in wrath but in love, they shall strain their eyes even as children do upon the road on which they expect momentarily to see the gladdening figures of their absent parents. These are they whose prayer does not cease to ascend day nor night: "Amen. Come, Lord Jesus."

Once more, this confidence becomes an aggressive power, working out purification and progress. For, after all, life, if it shall be worth while, must be something more than a mere struggle for existence, a mere battle for the defence of a treasure, no matter how great and precious. There must be before it a prospect of advancement. The possibility of increasing its gains must be guaranteed to it as well as the possibility of conserving its gains or the original fund entrusted to it. "And every one that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure" (1 John iii. 3). For he reasons that that which he is to be, and that which he ought to be, it is worth while for him to begin to be, since "we know that, if he shall be manifested, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is." Growth in all that pertains to the type of life begotten by the Son of Man is given a strong impulse and motive.

The early Christians were not only buoyed and sustained by the expectation of the Second Advent of the Master, but also

stimulated to most astonishing missionary efforts. This means that it was with them a hope and not a fear. At the end of the tenth century in the history of the Church, the same expectation revived. The end of the world at the close of the first millennium of Christianity was preached by many and believed by more. But, instead of resulting in purer lives and more earnest efforts to spread the gospel, it issued in excesses and riots of licentiousness such as have rarely been surpassed in any period. Those who looked forward to it were filled with fear; they were morally paralysed and petrified; they were carried away helpless victims to the evil that was in them. "Maranatha" (The Lord cometh) does indeed become anathema "if any man loveth not the Lord" (1 Cor. xvi. 22). To serve as a conserving and stimulating influence, the belief in the Presence of the Christ must be a living hope.

2. The Manifold Aspect of the Hope.

While the conviction that the Master shall reveal Himself in the future is a constant

and universal accompaniment and fruit of Christian faith, it assumes a large number and variety of forms. Some of these are apparently contradictory of one another, and those who entertain them are apt at times to appear to one another as not holding to the conviction at all.

In some Christians a sense is developed of the Master's presence and companionship as a living and powerful reality in such a manner that they cannot conceive of Him as either ever having gone away or as coming again. Bodily and material reappearance would add nothing to the comfort these have in the sense of His nearness. What could be the meaning, for instance, of a Second Coming to a person like Frances Ridley Havergal, who said that she could not conceive of the ascension of Christ, since to her He was always present? Or could one like Charles Spurgeon take any personal interest in a visible Second Advent who is reported to have said, that never for even fifteen minutes in his experience had he missed the sense of Christ's nearness to

himself? And what shall we say of the long line of mystics who habitually saw their Saviour not merely in ceremony and symbol, but in day-dream and night vision? who held converse with Him and addressed Him not merely in prayer and sacrament, but in the privacy of the monastic cell as well as in the publicity of daily labour? Who both saw Him and heard Him "whether in the body or apart from the body they knew not"? Surely all these could not, except by a violent break from the logic of their own experience, think of a material Second Coming as of vital import to them; surely, if they use the language of the apocalyptists, it must be because of inability to avoid using forms of thought current in their environment.

It is a question whether "the disciple whom Jesus loved," the author of the Fourth Gospel, was not the prototype of this class of Christian. To him the coming again was identical with the coming of the Comforter. For does not he report Jesus as saying: "I will not leave you desolate: I come unto you"? (John xiv. 18 ff.). In

this familiar and precious passage, Jesus, according to John, uses the word "come" of Himself, of the Father, and of the Holy Spirit; and in such a way as to blur the distinction between the coming of the three. Of Himself He says, "I go away, and I come unto you." And of the joint coming of the Father and Himself He says, "If a man love me . . . we will come unto him, and make our abode with him." The key to the complicated usage seems to be in the expression: "He that loveth me . . . I will love him, and manifest myself unto him." The coming of the Comforter was only the flooding of the world with the light that was to reveal the presence of the Lord Himself, and since the Father was revealed through Him only, His own manifestation was to be the manifestation of the Father. Yet it cannot be without significance that the same Gospel is silent on the apocalyptic Second Coming. If the Master was to be present in power among His loved ones, His physical manifestation to the world could possess for them only secondary interest.

There is another type of believer to whom the presence of the Risen Redeemer is a fact of experience, but not in the immediate form of the mystic. While he does not associate the presence of the Lord with a material phenomenon, neither does he altogether dissociate it from the world of material facts. He feels it through the medium of palpable signs and emblems. His heart burns within him as he discourses with the mysterious stranger by the way, but it is only "in the breaking of bread" that the Master is "known of him."

There is a large class of devout souls whose spiritual senses are dulled by the humdrum hubbub of daily routine. But when they withdraw from the din and strife of worldly interests and employments and fall under the spell of an elaborate and impressive ritual, especially if it be enriched with suggestive associations interwoven into it through generations of human experience, their apprehension of outward matters is in its turn lulled to sleep, and the gently awakened spiritual sense recognises the

"Vision of His Face." While they muse the fire burns, and in the accompanying glow they see the Lord.

Others are not as sensitive to spiritual realities. They must be startled by soul-stirring occurrences. Some escape from monotony by some great crisis in public affairs; the explosive detonation of a sudden and stupendous calamity, rising above all the din and turmoil of life like a clap of thunder, is needed to arrest these in their course and to enable them to see the Lord in the momentary lull following the event.

Still others can only feel the nearness of the Great Companion in the fellowship of service with Him. As they gird themselves to the task of relieving suffering or righting wrong, of bringing cheer into darkened places or healing and restoring the broken and bruised, they remember His words when He said, "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of these little ones, ye have done it unto me," they penetrate the disguise and discover the Christ.

It is related of one of these devout souls,

a cobbler by trade, that he had the assurance of his Saviour in a dream that on the next day He would visit him in his shop. Whereat the faithful one made himself ready for the promised call. From his basement bench he would lift his eyes to the side-walk above and listen to the tramp of footsteps, and eagerly imagine that each successive passer-by might be the Master. And from time to time he would leave his bench, go up the street and invite some weary one to sit down and rest in his humble quarters, and offer him refreshing food and drink. The evening came. The Master had failed to keep his promise. But during his night's sleep the Master stood once more beside his bed, and as he humbly reminded Him of His unfulfilled promise, the Master told him that every weary one he had taken in and refreshed and cheered during the course of the day was Himself in disguise.

But there are also other souls who are not favoured with the privilege of the Vision of Christ in any of its forms. They do not doubt the testimony of their brethren who

have glimpses of Him, or of those who live in His ever present companionship ; but for themselves, they must look into the future for that full and intimate fellowship which their hearts crave.

3. The Spiritual Value of the Parousia.

For every Christian the fact cannot help but be of the utmost importance, that there is a promise of a larger blessing and of a purer joy in the future through Christ's presence in the world. What is the essential meaning of the promise? We shall not go far astray if we find the answer in some such form as this :

1. All the powers of the world, known and unknown, are in the end to work out God's will of love, and through Christ manifest to the entire universe His goodness and truth. Mere spectacular display is certainly far from the inner thought of Jesus when He speaks of His own coming in glory with the "angels." Angels are ministering spirits. So are the forces of nature, and so may

become the wills of men. All shall in the end be brought into harmony with His plan and purpose.

2. Christ's thought shall be the standard of discrimination for all and in all matters. Men and things shall be brought more and more to His ideas as a basis of approval and disapproval. Borrowing the imagery of antecedent methods of thought, Christianity has from age to age clothed this aspect of its hope in vivid pictures of a specific event, including terrible Judgment, like that of the "*Dies iræ, dies illa.*" But the interest underlying and conveyed by these is always that Christ's will shall be the rule not only to guide, but also to measure His action after it is done.

3. Relationship with Christ shall be free and intimate. At present the spirit struggles with a thousand hindrances in its effort to reach the bosom of its Master. At His coming it shall have access to Him unforbidden and uninterfered with by any. Therefore it prays: "Amen. Come, Lord Jesus."

APPENDIX.

THE phrase which constitutes the title of this book has a history both in its broader and in its narrower sense. The latter is limited to the Biblical and associated apocryphal and apocalyptic writings. For a minuter study of this history Dr. Driver's article ("Son of Man") in Hastings' *Bible Dictionary* may be taken as the most comprehensive guide. It contains not only an analytic survey of the ancient usage of the phrase, but also a summary of all the principal interpretations of it to the date of publication (1902). Kindred in aim, but neither hampered by the limitations nor helped by the special requirements of a dictionary or encyclopedia article, is Edwin A. Abbott's *The Message of the Son of Man* (London, Adam and Charles Black, 1909). Somewhat narrower in its scope, but very keen and, from the philological

point of view, invaluable, is Dalman's discussion in the *Words of Jesus* (Eng. tr., Edinburgh, T. & T. Clark, 1902). Other more condensed treatments of the subject from the same point of view will be found in the standard works on the *Biblical Theology of the New Testament* (Beyschlag, Eng. tr., T. & T. Clark, Edinburgh, 1895) (vol. i. chap. iii.); B. Weiss, Eng. tr., T. & T. Clark, Edinburgh, 1888 (part i. chap. ii.); G. B. Stevens, International Theological Library, Scribner's Sons, 1899 (part i. chap. iv.).

Geo. P. Gould's article in Hastings' *Dictionary of Christ and the Gospels* is an answer to the questions, Whence, when and why did Jesus adopt the title? and why His followers did not apply it to Him? and leaves little to be desired.

Works on the Teaching of Jesus also include sections discussing the use of the phrase by Jesus as applied to Himself (cf. H. H. Wendt, *Teaching of Jesus* (Charles Scribner's Sons, 1892 (vol. ii. chap. i.); Stalker, *Christology of Jesus* (Hodder & Stoughton, 1900 (chap. ii.). Here must be

mentioned Dr. A. B. Bruce's *Kingdom of God* (T. & T. Clark, 1891), a scholarly but untechnical discussion of the whole Teaching of Jesus.

In addition to the above, a class of works representing a broader effort to reach fundamental ideas underlying all expository treatment have great value in the study. (1) Foremost in this class stands Professor Ernest F. Scott's *The Kingdom and the Messiah* (T. & T. Clark, 1911). It is characterised by special scholarly insight into the thought of the period in which the title was used. (2) W. L. Walker's *The Cross and the Kingdom* (second edition, 1911, T. & T. Clark) stands out for the sane theological deductions based upon recent critical research of the less radical type. (3) The late Dr. W. N. Clarke's *The Ideal of Jesus* (N.Y., Scribner's, 1911) is a free interpretation in modern terms of the mind of Jesus, but not the result of an original study of the words of Jesus reported in the Gospel. It is based rather on the general results harvested in this field by New Testament specialists.

Appendix

A third class of works which may prove valuable in organising courses kindred to that of the subject of this book would include the larger discussions of the life and work of Jesus. We can only mention here, however, those that are concerned with the portraiture of His personality and character. Those that give an account of His work in its chronological, geographical, and antiquarian interest are numerous and most of them familiar. Of the first-named type the following will be found the most helpful: (1) David Smith, *In the Days of His Flesh* (London, Hodder & Stoughton); (2) A. E. Garvie, *Studies in the Inner Life of Jesus* (London, Hodder & Stoughton, 1907); and (3) W. A. Grist, *The Historic Christ in the Faith of To-day* (N.Y. & London, Fleming H. Revell Co., 1911).

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